

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2019-1028

TITLE: Resolution Recognizing Rising Textbook Affordability Issues in Higher Education

AUTHOR(S): Judiciary Chairman Will Sandifer, Senate President Michael Murphy, External Affairs Agency Head Emily Dempsey

SPONSOR(S): Student Body President Ian Green, Majority Party Leader Cooper Brown, Senator Tyler Kendrick, Senator Sarah Abraham, Senator Austin Carroll, Senator Nicholas Callaway, Senator Cody Wheeler, Senator Sophia Bond

WHEREAS, the State of Florida has the second lowest higher education tuition rates in the United States^[1]; and,

WHEREAS, in recent years, the average price of college textbooks has risen 82% and the average student spends approximately \$1200 on textbooks annually^[2]; and,

WHEREAS, in a recent US Public Interest Research Group poll, 65% of college students^[3] answered that they had skipped buying textbooks and other course materials because of affordability issues; and,

WHEREAS, the California State Legislature recently passed Assembly Bill No. 2385^[4] authored by students from California Polytechnic State University regarding greater transparency from textbook publishers; and,

WHEREAS, the aforementioned legislation urged textbook publishers to specify differences between new and old editions in order to allow students to make educated decisions regarding purchases of new materials; and,

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature has previously shown a commitment to textbook affordability as Florida Statute 1004.085^[5] requires each state university to post required course materials at least 45 days prior to the start of the term in order to allow students adequate time to find textbooks and other course materials at the best price; and,

WHEREAS, current Florida Governor Ron DeSantis as well as former Florida Governor and current US Senator Rick Scott have both publicly expressed their commitment to affordable higher education practices in the State of Florida^{[6][7]}; and,

WHEREAS, there are many other options that reduce textbook costs including open-source textbooks that can save students as much as \$100 per semester on textbook costs^[8] and other E-text options; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate expresses its support for the students from California Polytechnic State University that sought to make college more affordable for all students in the state of California.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate expresses its support of the legislation and statutes previously passed by the Florida Legislature regarding textbook affordability.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate encourages faculty at the University of Florida to explore more affordable options for textbooks and other course materials including but not limited to open-source textbooks and other E-textbooks.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate urges the Florida State Legislature to continue to pursue potential legislation that would make textbooks and other course materials more affordable for students in institutions of higher education.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to President W. Kent Fuchs, Provost Joseph Glover, the Florida House of Representatives, Florida State Senate, Vice President of Government and Community Relations Mark Kaplan.

[1] <https://www.fastweb.com/college-search/articles/top-10-states-with-the-cheapest-in-state-public-college-tuition>

[2] <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/personalfinance/2014/02/02/cnbc-college-textbooks-expensive/5038807/>

[3] <https://uspig.org/reports/usp/fixing-broken-textbook-market>

[4] https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2385

[5] http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?mode=View%20Statutes&SubMenu=1&App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=1004.085&URL=1000-1099/1004/Sections/1004.085.html

[6] <https://rondesantis.com/education/>

[7] <https://www.flgov.com/governor-scott-outlines-vision-for-improving-higher-education-2/>

[8] <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2014/01/28/report-high-textbook-prices-have-college-students-struggling>